OUR TORNADOES,

THEIR FORMATION AND PREMONITORY SIGNS OF APPROACH.

An Oppressive Sultriness—Peculiar Appearance of the Clouds—A Strange Lividness — Heavy Roaring—The Fatal Balloon-Shaped Destroyer.

[Compiled from Gen. Hayes' Report.]

Omitting consideration of the tornadoes, so-called by Portuguese and Spanish navigators on the African coast, and confining our attention to the United States, it is believed that these storms are possessed of the following prominent characteristics: The general direction of movement of the tornado is invariably from a point in the southwest quadrant to a point in the northeast quadrant. The tornado cloud assumes the form of a funnel, the small end drawing near to, or resting upon, the earth. This cloud and the air beneath it revolve about a central vertical axis with inconceivable rapidity, and always in a direction contrary to the movement of the hands of a watch. The destructive violence of the storm is sometimes confined to a path a few yards in width, as when the small or tail end just touches the earth; while, on the other hand, as the body of the cloud lowers, more of it rests upon the earth, the violence increases, and the path widens to the extreme limit of eighty rods.

On the day of the storm, and for several hours previous to the appearance of the tornado cloud, what indications of its probable formation and approach are within the comprehension of an ordinary observer, and can readily be detected by him? A sultry, oppressive condition of the atmosphere, described by various observers as follows: "I really experienced a sickly sensation under the influence of the sun's rays." "I was compelled to stop work on account of the peculiar exhaustion experienced from physical exertion." "It seemed as if the lightest garments that I could put on were a burden to me." "There was not a breath of air stirring." "The air, at times, came in puffs, as from a heated furnace." "I felt a want of breath, the air frequently appearing too rarefied to breathe freely." "I was startled at the sudden and continued rise in the thermometer, especially at this season of the year." "It was terribly oppressive; it seemed as if the atmosphere was unusually heavy and pressing down on me with a great weight."

Enough examples have been cited to indicate the effects and signs of this oppressive sultriness. Other signs may be found in the development and peculiar formation of the clouds in the western horizon. Sometimes these peculiar clouds extend from the southwest through the west by the north to the northwest. More frequently, however, they form in the northwest and southwest, sometimes commencing first in the former quarter and then again in the latter, but in either case they are equally significant. The marked peculiarity of the clouds is found to occur not only in the form but in the color and character of development.

The sudden appearance of ominous clouds, first in the southwest and then almost immediately in the northwest and northeast (or perhaps reversed in the order of their appearance), generally attracts the attention of the most casual observer. In almost all cases these premonitory clouds are unlike any ordinary formation. If they are light, their appearance resembles smoke issuing from a burning building or straw stack, rolling upward in fantastic shapes to great heights; sometimes they are like a fine mist, or quite white like fog or steam. Some persons describe these light clouds as at times apparently iridescent or glowing, as if a pale whitish light issued from their irregular surfaces. If the premonitory clouds are dark and present a deep greenish hue, this fairly forbodes very great evil. So also, if they appear jet black from the center to circumference, or if this deep set color appears only at the center, gradually diminishing in intensity as the outer edges of the cloud or bank of clouds are approached. Sometimes these dark clouds, instead of appearing in solid and heavy masses, roll up lightly out till intensely black, like the smoke from an engine or locomotive burning soft coal. They have been described as of a purple or bluish tinge, or at times possessed of a strange lividness, or frequently dark green, and again of an inky blackness that fairly startles one with its intensity.

Another and invariable sign of the tornado's approach is a heavy roaring, which augments in intensity as the tornado cloud advances. This roaring is compared to the passage of a heavily loaded freight train moving over a bridge or through a deep pass or tunnel, or as heard on damp mornings when the sound is very clear and loud. At times the roaring has been so violent that persons have compared it to the simultaneous "rush of 10,000 trains of cars." Again, the roaring is likened to the low rumbling of distant thunder. The varying intensity of the roar, as here represented, is apparently due to the lack of uniformity in the positions of the various observers with respect to the advancing tornado cloud. Those situated nearest the cloud, other things being equal, experience the loudest roar, while to those at greater distances the noise is proportionally weaker. In any event, however, the noise is sufficiently peculiar and distinct to create alarm, and as a means of warning should not be overlooked under any pretext.

The tornado cloud is, generally speaking, at its first formation funnel-shaped—that is to say, it tapers from the top downward, not always in the same degree with every appearance of the cloud, but the lower end of it (the part nearest the earth) is invariably the smallest, and this, too, whatever may be the inclination of the central axis of the cloud to the vertical or plumb line. As seen in different positions and stages of development by various observers, located differently, the tornado cloud has been called "balloon-shaped," "basket-shaped," "egg shaped," "trailing on the ground like the tail of an enormous kite;" "of bulbous form;" "like an elephant's trunk," etc. In the majority of instances, however, observers describe the cloud as appearing like an inverted funnel. When the small end of the cloud just reaches to the earth, the violence of its whirl causes a peculiarly formed cloud of dust and finely divided debris, around which play small gatherings of condensed vapor.

To appearances, now, the tornado cloud has two heads, one on the surface of the earth and the other in the sky, the bodies of each joining in mid-air and tapering both ways with the smallest diameter at their junction. In other words, the cloud now assumes the shape of an hour-glass, and the lower portion displays extraordinary destructive violence. This last and most fatal form of the tornado cloud is, fortunately, not a constant feature of the storm. The tornado cloud is constantly changing from the hour-glass form to that of the upright funnel, or some other intermediate shape previously referred to.

A Small Balance.

[Waterbury American.]

The Lincoln monument fund amounted to $20,000, raised by popular subscription soon after Lincoln's death, but salaries and designs for the monument, which was never begun, have left a balance of only $1 500 of it.

A DEAD NOVELIST.

Some Reflections on the Death of the Author of "Dark Days."

[Original.]

The death of Hugh Conway, the novelist, recently, at Monaco, is a sharp reminder of the mutability of all earthly plans and prospects. It recalls the legend of the wish angel, who hovers continually about mortals, hearing them express their most cherished desires. He grants their wish sooner or later, but under conditions which strip it of all joy. He humbles human beings by giving them what they long for, and thereby proving the illusiveness of all dreams of happiness.

Very little is known of Hugh Conway, whose name in private life was Frederick John Fargus. He lived, aspired, strove, and in some measure achieved, then died just as life seemed to open before him. That much is known. The ellipsis in the short chapter can be readily filled by the imagination of any one who knows how steep and rugged is the pathway that leads even to the boundaries of success.

He was only thirty-seven years old, had had his share of struggle, self-denial, privation and baffled hope, of course, since none who strive are strangers to these dragons that crouch by the road to eminence. Two years ago Mr. Fargus, who was an auctioneer in Bristol, wrote "Called Back," a story now known to two or three hundred thousand readers here and abroad. It was published in Arrowsmith's Annual, and lay unnoticed on the London book stalls for weeks, and perhaps months. One day Henry Labouchère, going on a journey, picked it up to beguile the tediousness of travel. He read it, was pleased with it, and afterward spoke of it in Truth as a very clever story. Then all London wanted to read it, and did read it. The Annual was soon exhausted, and "Called Back" was brought out in a new form. A hundred thousand copies were soon sold. It was republished in this country, and had an enormous sale. It was dramatized and had a long run in London and also in New York.

As a work of art "Called Back" had its defects, but it also had what offset the defects—an indefinable charm. It had force and feeling, the germ and life of all art. One felt that its author had a strong personality. It depicted no new phase of life, revealed no hidden things. It simply grouped some old, old figures of fiction in a more striking way. There was a flavor of psychology, mystery about it, and a surprise at the end of it. The characters which figured in it, and whose fate had such a potent charm for so many thousands of readers were: A blind man who recovers his sight by the usual surgical operation, a beautiful mad woman, two very daring and successful villains, with a faithful nurse and one or two other ciphers in the shape of obscure servitors. Yet the adventures and entanglements of these personages commanded the public's warmest attention.

A few months later "Dark Days" appeared. This had still greater success than its predecessor. Its heroine was also a beautiful mad woman, and it had a captivating surprise in the last chapter. It was steady, unmitigated tragedy from the first to the last word. It was serious to the point of depression, never deviating into the slightest approach to the comic or flippant. It was an intense story, dramatically told in the first person. It had not a line of philosophy. Indeed, there was not a word in it unnecessary to the simple telling of a powerful tale. Its author had acted upon the old idea that a story should simply be a story—nothing more, nothing less. He demonstrated that it needed nothing but power and feeling to make it take hold on its readers.

These two books brought gold and honor to their author, and opened the way for future achievements in the field he had long hungered to enter. Then, just as he had fairly begun to breathe the air of his dreams, he died. Close attention to his work left him exhausted. Seeking recreation and rest, he went to Rome, and there probably contracted the malaria which culminated in typhoid fever at Monaco, and ended his life.

We, who see only that part of life which begins and ends here, look upon a sudden lopping off like this with sadness. It strikes us with mournful perplexity. Yet, it has been said, that some time we shall know that every life is complete. The symmetry and perfection of human endeavor are hidden from our finite eyes, but they may be there. It cannot be that all human endeavor is empty and unrewarded. Even what looks so to us may elsewhere have its full fruition, its long day of joy. The soul, that mysterious star of our life, which "cometh from afar," turns its back upon the prizes of the world that it may win greater ones in better countries.

Death, the ancient mystery, hides many a perfected dream beneath a coffin lid. Indeed, we may one day learn that he is kindest to those whose eyes he closes while life is still bright to them. They who pass out of the contest before they are wounded are doubtless the most blessed. Yet we are so untaught in wisdom that we bestow upon them pity and lamentations instead of felicitations. We speak of the sadness of a life ended when its desires were beginning to be realized. We forget that all honors are short lived, that fame is a breath which an adverse wind may dissipate; that fair prospects may end in fierce storms; that joy may come with the morning and sorrow intrude at night; that hope, health, happiness, all the sweet-voiced angels who walk with us here from time to time, have wings and fly away fitfully, whispering never a word of their return.

Remembering how difficult it is to live, we should lay a flower upon the grave of Hugh Conway with a smile. The pen dropped from his hand when it had but begun to show its power; yet, who shall dare to say he has lost by the change? Man is, indeed, of few days upon the earth, and those days are filled with what seem vain imaginings, futile strivings:

"Here sits he, shaping wings to fly,
His heart forebodes a mystery;
He names the name eternity."

GERTRUDE GARRISON.

NEW YORK, May 28.

Passing the Teutonic Guard.

[Ben: Perley Poore.]

One of the most efficient divisions in the Army of the Potomac, as organized by Gen. McClellan in the fall of 1861, was that commanded by Blenker, who came at the head of the First German rifles of New York, about 800 strong, and became the commander of some 12,000 men, nearly all of them Germans. Like the children of the captive Jews, who spoke "half in Hebrew and half in the speech of Ashdod," these Teutonic warriors had a vague idea of the English language, and their style of "challenging" was unique.

As I was going the grand rounds with a lady and gentleman from Boston, we were "passed" through all the pickets on the Leesburg turnpike on the presentation of a free season ticket on a railroad route, which was first shown by accident instead of the legitimate pass from headquarters, and afterwards to test the knowledge of the sentries, "Yah! dat ish goot—forvart!" was the approving verdict after each ostensible careful examination of the card.

DOWN IN MEXICO.

HOW SOME OF OUR PEOPLE MISBEHAVE AMONG THE MEXICANS.

Why the Average American Is Not Liked — One Trait Which Is Specially Provoking—The Rudeness of an Excursion Party.

[Mexico Cor. New York Post.]

I have said the average American is not liked. As might be expected, there are many in Mexico who are just as much respected and liked as anybody. No one recognizes a gentleman more quickly than the Mexican, and no one appreciates one more. Some of these Americans have lived there many years, have well-established business, and own property; others have but lately come in with the railroads, or are connected with them, and have entered the country to stay. The testimony of all these is unanimous that an American who attends to his own affairs, obeys the laws and acts as he would in any other foreign country, is as well treated as anywhere on earth.

My observation has gone even beyond this, viz.: that an American who does not behave himself is not treated half as badly as he deserves. Americans would not dare to behave in any other foreign country as most of them do in Mexico, yet their impudence and intolerable swagger are patiently endured. If they do not in some way break the law, they are not molested; and, if they do, they often escape with half the punishment they deserve. Some of the Americans are coarse, vulgar loafers, whose looks condemn them half a mile away, whom it is safe to arrest at any time on mere suspicion; others are roughs and refugees who are much "wanted" by prosecuting attorneys in the United States; others are genteel dead-beats, who, perhaps, bring good letters of introduction, borrow money and get credit upon them, and suddenly disappear; others may be honest and industrious enough, but simply ill bred.

Of all the American's traits, his peculiar style of getting intoxicated most provokes the Mexican. The Mexican has no objection to a man's taking too much. He himself occasionally mistages his gauge. But he does it at home, or if not he gets home or to the calaboose with all possible dispatch with the aid of a friend or a policeman. He makes no noise, disturbs no one, and generally goes to sleep. The American's style is just the reverse. He makes all the noise he can, disturbs everybody, and stays awake all night. This is his sole conception of a "high time." The Mexican generally gets intoxicated accidentally, the American intentionally and with intent to "paint the town," which he here does in royal style.

A much better class of Americans is now entering Mexico, and the Mexicans will perhaps soon presume an American to be a gentleman until they learn otherwise, instead of the contrary. Still too many even of those who should know better behave in Mexico too much as they would in an Indian village in their own country. Last winter an excursion party of some forty or fifty young men and women from San Francisco went down to Mexico. They were all over 21 years of age, and as they traveled in two special Pullman cars and were fashionably dressed, it is fair to presume they had been brought up by somebody and educated somewhere. At Paso del Norte some of them chipped off pieces of the church to see what it was made of, and shook hands with the figure of the Virgin Mary. At other places they walked into houses and looked about as if they were ancient ruins, without asking permission or saying a word to the inmates. In others they felt of the people's clothes to see the quality of the fabrics.

Everywhere they stared at native ladies and gentlemen infinitely their superiors in education, refinement and wealth, much as one would gaze at wild animals. In true American style it was assumed, of course, that none of the natives understood a word of English, and comments of all sorts were exchanged in full hearing of the object of the comments. All such actions are patiently endured by the people, who generally attribute them to ignorance and bad breeding, though there are plenty who are acute enough to know that they are thus treated simply because they are Mexicans, and that Americans would not think of thus acting the hoodlum in England, France or Germany.

ON DUTY.

[Original.]

The camp-fire dimly burns
Through the night and the snow,
And over a frozen earth
The wild winds blow.

But the sentinel stands at his post
As the hours creep by,
While clouds grow heavy and thick
In the sullen sky.

His limbs drag hard, he longs
To rest awhile;
Yet over his white, cold lips
Comes never a smile,

For his heart is a soldier's heart,
And his blood runs warm
When he thinks of his brother-men
Asleep in the storm.

Then he shoulders his gun and draws
A quick, deep breath;
What foe shall conquer him now
But the foeman Death?

* * * * * *

A soul had sorrowed much
And had waited long—
It had striven as heroes strive
Amid the throng.

Yet firm as an oak that sways
In the boreal breath,
It saw men fail and die,
And smiled on Death.

GEORGE EDGAR MONTGOMERY.

NEW YORK, May 28.

Stage Fright of Experienced Actors.

[Brooklyn Eagle.]

The oldest and most experienced actors suffer from stage fright when they appear before an audience without the environment of a play. The hardy professionals who recited at the benefits recently given at the Casino and the Academy of Music were as nervous as a lot of untrained amateurs when they went out upon the stage. When Mr. Mantall, who is usually the most placid and self contained of actors, went out at the Casino to recite, beads of cold perspiration bedewed his manly brow; the first verses of his poem showed that the actor was extremely self conscious.

That resolute and earnest young tragedian, Howarth, who never gave the slightest evidences of nervousness when playing the leading support of John McCullough was as pale as a ghost when he stepped out to give his recitation in everyday clothes. So it was with Osmond Tearle, when he recited at the Academy of Music. I have often heard actors speak of it, and the only explanation that I can give is that when they have the make-up on their faces and a character is developed in a play their own identity is lost behind that of the role in which they appear. The make-up on the face is a sort of mask which gives them confidence. As an instance of this, Billy Kersands, the well-known minstrel, is as nervous as a school girl on commencement day if he appears on the stage without burnt cork. The burnt cork is quite unnecessary, as Kersands is a negro, but he puts it on regularly every night before he goes upon the stage.

Beauty and Brewster.

[Chicago Tribune.]

This story is told of the first meeting of ex-Attorney General Brewster and his handsome wife: "Brewster as a lawyer had some business before the bureau of the treasury, in which his wife was employed. He went into the room in which she was at work. Looking up and catching a sight of her future husband, she involuntarily exclaimed to the lady seated next to her: 'Well, that is the ugliest man I ever saw in my life.' Brewster took off his hat and, bowing very politely to the surprised lady, said: 'Thank you, madam. I always like to hear a lady speak frankly what she thinks.' An acquaintance followed and a marriage came after. Mr. Brewster has frequently twitted his wife about the first words she ever spoke to him."

The Only Fighting Apostle.

[New York Letter.]

It is well known that the late Elias Howe, Jr., the inventor of the sewing-machine, not only enlisted as a common soldier in the ranks of the Seventeenth Connecticut regiment, carried a musket and did full military duty during the war, but at a certain juncture when national finances were at a low ebb, he paid soldiers of the regiment their wages for three months out of his own pocket. Relative to this incident, P. T. Barnum the other day told the following story, never before published:

While Mr. Howe was counting out the money referred to, a stranger who was a clergyman entered the tent and said he had heard of Mr. Howe's liberality and had called to ask him to contribute toward building a church for his congregation.

"Church, church," said Mr. Howe, without looking up from the bills which he was counting. "Building churches in war times when so much is needed to save our country! What church is it?"

"St. Peter's church," replied the clergyman.

"Oh, St. Peter's" said Mr. Howe. "Well, St. Peter was the only fighting apostle—he cut the man's ear off. I'll go $500 on St. Peter, but I am spending most of my money on salt-petre now."

MOSAICS.

To me more dear congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art.
—[Goldsmith.

The honors of a name 't is just to guard;
They are a trust but lent us, which we take,
And should, in reverence to the donor's fame,
With care transmit them down to other hands.
—[Shirley.

What is the Whichness of the Now
And the Itness of the This?
A dainty maid with pouting lips,
And a time to snatch a kiss.

What is the Whereness of the Then
And the Nearness of the Who?
An old papa, with unkind haste,
And a number twenty shoe.
—[John D. Sterry.

She sat alone on the cold gray stone,
And this was the burden of her moan:
My uncle is cook on board of a sloop.
My cousin has joined a theatrical troupe.
My sister caught cold with her beau on the stoop.
My lover dear
Lies under here,
And I sit alone and think and think,
For I can't go alone to the skating rink.
--[The Judge.

A WORD OF WARNING.

Advice to Americans Who Are Tempted by the "Bargain" Peddlers of Paris.

[Paris Cor. Chicago Tribune.]

And here let me venture another word of warning, in addition to the one about autographs, which I hope may be useful to my traveling countrymen. Be on your guard against all those itinerant venders who call at your lodgings with so-called bargains, which, for men, are contraband cigars—pure cabbage-leaves—pipes having belonged to some distinguished personage—I was let in once with "Gen. Bern's meerschaum"—and fancy cravats; and for ladies handkerchiefs, lace, and curtains! Everything is a mere catchpenny. Half the time they are stolen goods, for buying which you risk being treated as a receiver.

Not infrequently their sale is a device of the enemy to take the topography of your apartment with an ultimate view to its robbery; and even when the seller is honest—that is to say, when he is not the burglar's forerunner or the shoplifter's delegate, he palms off his gull articles that have been picked up by him at some auction of "slightly damaged goods," and which when examined after they have been paid for, turn out to be vastly inferior to what can be procured at half their cost from any respectable Parisian tradesman.

A regular association with a view to exploit the credulity of foreigners exists in the French capital, and has its ramifications all over the continent, with male and female agents, who operate on the unwary with the connivance of your concierge or of the waiter at your hotel, who share the profits of the transaction, esteeming all strangers, and especially American strangers, as creatures who have been created and brought into the world simply to be the prey of impostors and charlatans. Turn a deaf ear, O, my compatriots, to these applicants for your patronage, charm they never so wisely, for they have honeyed tongues, and if you listen to their song will cheat you in spite of your better judgment.

Never mind if they do tell you that they have been recommended by a friend of yours. Sometimes they have been by people who, in order to get rid of their importunities, give them a list of their acquaintances. Oftener they have copied the names which appear in the travelers' list of the Anglo-American newspapers; but, whether they have been recommended by any one, or have forged a recommendation for themselves, kick them out, unhesitatingly, for they will not sue you for assault and battery, as they hugely dread any investigation, mostly having unfavorable judicial antecedents; if you do not you will risk the robbery of your apartment, not infrequently complicated with a murder, and at the very least you are safe to be swindled.

IN THE POSTOFFICE.

A GLANCE AT THE WORKING OF A BIG MACHINE.

How New York's Mail Matter Is Received, Sorted, Stamped, Distributed and Sent on Its Way—Details of the Work.

[New York Times.]

Along the Park row side of the New York postoffice, on a level with the second floor and carefully protected at either end, there runs a narrow little gallery, bare and cold as a prison corridor. Now and then an employe of the office flits along over its stone floor or possibly a visitor walks through it. Standing in this gallery one looks down upon the principal working room of the largest and best-managed postoffice in the United States. He is near enough to the roof to note the great glass ceiling, ribbed with iron, through which the sunlight filters, and on which the rain falls with a muffled sound or the snow lies heavily. He is not too far from the floor below to be confused by the scores of hurrying men, the glare of dozens of electric lights, if the day be at all dark, and a curious jumble of sounds, some of which he has seldom or never heard before, and all of which seem to be hopelessly entangled, although striving valiantly to extricate themselves.

A bell clangs somewhere, and the men dash about like the bits of glass in a kaleidoscope. Fat and important-looking baskets, loaded to the brim with letters and papers, go whisking around at a breakneck speed, turning corners with a squeak and a scrape and rushing down narrow lanes as if bent on destruction and determined to have their own way. Stout bags and thin bags; bags that are old and humble; bags that are new and vain; bags on crutches, so to speak, and bags that look as if they could almost go scurrying over the world alone; bags that have seen better day; bags that will see worse; terra-cotta-colored bags, buff-colored bags, subdued buff-colored bags, ash-colored bags, black bags, bags of colors which are not named and never will be, bags of every kind, shade, character and shape—all these are running in and out, opening themselves on great tables, gasping as flattened out and empty bags ought to gasp, and then hiding themselves away in the basement with thousands of their kind, until called into use again, when they will go almost to the uttermost ends of the earth at the rate of 6,000 a day.

Piles and bales of letters grow up on the tables like mushrooms and melt away like a spring flood when the ice goes out. There are all kinds of letters for all sorts of people in all parts of the world.

But of all these things the great machine down below the little gallery, unlike the postmaster or postmistress who somewhere may hand you this paper, cares nothing. Behind the high screen that hides its operations from the public gaze the machine stands waiting. At the little holes through which the public shoots its letters the postoffice's work begins. The acquaintance of the ordinary letter writer with the machine is confined to the cogs who sit behind the little windows and wrestle with him over the amount of postage he must pay. Even if they were not true and faithful parts of the great mechanism these cogs would have a selfish interest in doing their work well. They own their own stock in trade as absolutely as though the stamps were so many village lots or shares of railroad stock. The room in which these cogs turn are fenced off from the rest of the building, and there are locked gates to prevent intrusion. Beside the stamp clerk are the sheets of perforated paper ornamented with portraits of statesmen and soldiers who are dead and gone, boxes of envelopes, packages of postal cards, little piles of coins and rolls of bills. On a shelf within reaching distance are the scales which furnish an answer to the question which in all the gamut of vocal expression bounces through the window hour after hour and day after day, "What's-the-postage-on-that?"

Outside the four great white faces of a clock fastened to a column in the center of the room looks solemnly down on a scene that is infinitely more confusing to one standing there than when viewing it from the little gallery. Of all the jumble of sounds the one most readily separated from the others is the convulsive patter of the date and canceling stamps. These two are cast in one frame and attached to the same handle. One blow cancels the stamp and prints the time of the letter's receipt and the date. The time in hours is changed every thirty minutes the year round. One man does nothing but change the dates, working upon one set of stamps while the other is in use. The clang of the bell indicates the change, and from this man the stampers get the new stamps.

Through the openings in the screen on the Broadway and Park row sides runs the fuel of the machine. The letters fly up through the openings, strike a shield and fall down on a table as smooth as glass and without an angle into which a letter may obstinately slip. During the day there are two or three men at each of these tables engaged in picking up the letters raining in through the openings, "facing" them—that is, turning them face up—and carrying them to the tables near by. A dab of the stamp on the bit of ink-saturated felt beside each stamper, a light dab on the letter, and away the piles go to the man who separate them.

Standing in the center of this room, which is not as large as it looks to be from the outside, with the screen rising up to the ceiling on three sides, and a medley of boxes, bags, doors and men on the other, one's glance in any direction is intercepted by the rows of pigeon holes in front of each separator. Each one of these pigeon holes, which rise above each other from the table to which they are attached to a convenient height for a man to reach, has some specific use, and if a man puts it to any other he is bound to hear of it. Those on the "city side" are mainly for the different carrier routes, and they are emptied of their contents at regular intervals by the carriers, who fish out the letters from the back. Those on the "distribution side" where letters going out of New York are handled, are for different cities, mail routes, states, and localities. New York state, for instance, has five separations, and there are 383 pigeon holes into which letters go. Nebraska has only one pigeon hole, the work of further separation being done on the postal cars. The separator must learn the location of these holes in the frame before him precisely as a printer learns his "case." In fact acquiring this knowledge is called "learning the case."

The Parting.

[Exchange.]

The parting was sad, the tears were bitter. Hide, sun, thy kindly face, and gather ye storm's blackest, inky scroll! Tenderly kiss the pale, wan cheeks; brush back the damp, clinging, auburn locks from the pale, high brow which a fond mother's lips have kissed since infancy. Speak the last sad, parting word, the words which make us linger on their echoes. Say good-bye for aye; press the cold hand and watch the slow, retreating form which fades away forever. He is going to play in his first base ball match.

A Tobacco Problem.

[Philadelphia Call.]

Mrs. Minks—There it is again. Tobacco, always tobacco. What will you do when you get to heaven, where there are no spittoons?

Mr. Minks—Perhaps there will be some there.

Mrs. Minks—Indeed there won't. The idea! What will you do then, Mr. Minks? Just answer that.

Mr. Minks—I really don't know, my dear, unless we can get seats near the edge.

Wife of the Nihilist Prince.

[Chicago Tribune.]

One of the pleasant things in connection with the imprisonment of dangerous characters in Claervaux by the French government is the faithfulness of the wife of the Nihilist, Prince Krapotkine. She has visited his prison daily throughout his long imprisonment, and, though his appearance has changed her affection has not. One day he appeared with not a tooth in the front of his mouth. They had fallen out. His gums were so scorbutic from damp, want of air and exercise that they fell out as he was eating a piece of bread. He writes scientific articles for Nature and other journals, and she has been allowed to take them out of prison after the governor reads them.

A Dash of Melancholy.

[San Francisco "Undertones."]

A well-known judge of severe aspect and impressive mien, a man of great legal attainments, dropped into the theatre the other night to see Archie Gunter's play. The strain of mental anxiety over knotty points and ingenious technicalities was relaxed, and he, a judge, laughed loudly as the rest. The act drop fell and the judge surveyed the house. It was packed and the arithmetical department of the judge's brain started in to calculate the value at 75 cents a head. When the act drop fell a second time he rose and threaded his way through the thirsty crowd. A gentle dash of melancholy began to show in his stern face, and as he stood at the bar with a friend waiting for his turn at a tumbler he asked kind of sadly:

"Say, how much do you think Gunter makes out of this play?"

"Oh, I don't know. Perhaps $300 a week at this rate."

"You don't say."

"Perhaps more in a bigger theatre."

"How long does it take a man to write a play like this?"

"Three weeks or a month, mebbe."

"Great Scott."

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing."

Their turn came and they drank. As they wiped their lips and walked out the judge said solemnly:

"I was thinking. I've spent my life writing a legal work and all I've got out of it is $600, and I doubt if I'll get any more—and Gunter gets $300 a week for a play!"

HISTORY OF THE TOMATO.

Eaten Over Three Hundred Years Ago—When It Came Into Common Use.

[Agricultural Exchange.]

A writer on horticulture states that the tomato is of South American origin, and was introduced into Europe by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, who discovered its valuable qualities as an esculent. From Spain its cultivation extended to Italy and the south of France, and finally to this country, where it first began to be used as a vegetable in the latter part of the last century. The tomato is mentioned by a writer on plants in England as early as 1597. Parkinson calls them "love apples" in 1656, and says "they are regarded as curiosities." Dodoens, a Dutch herbalist, writes in 1583 of their use as a vegetable, "to be eaten with pepper, salt, and oil." They were eaten by the Malays in 1755. Arthur Young, the English agriculturist, saw tomatoes in the market at Montpelier, in France, in 1792. The potato was probably brought from San Domingo by the French refugees, who also introduced into this country the egg-plant, the okra, and the small Chili pepper.

Dr. James Tilton, of Delaware, stated that when he returned from study in Europe, about 1802, he found the tomato growing in the gardens of the Duconts, Goresches, and other French emigrants from San Domingo, and remarked to his family that it was as a vegetable highly esteemed and generally eaten in France, Spain, and Italy, and especially valuable as a corrective of bile in the system. Dr. Tilton emigrated to Madison, Ind., in 1826, and raised the tomato in his garden there. It was then unknown in Louisville or the adjacent parts of Kentucky. It is also known that the tomato was planted early in the present century on the eastern shore of Maryland, that land of terrapins, soft crabs, oysters, canvas-back duck, and other epicurean delicacies. Many years elapsed, however, before the tomato became a favorite esculent in that region. In 1811 the Spanish minister saw the tomato growing in the garden of Mrs. Philip Barton Key, whose husband wrote the "Star Spangled Banner," and he recommended it as having been used in Spain for many years.

In 1814, a gentleman dining with a friend at Harper's Ferry, and seeing tomatoes on the table, remarked: "I see you eat tomatoes here; the District people are afraid of them." Tomatoes were brought to Massachusetts by Dr. William Goodwin, a son of William Goodwin, cashier of the Bank of Plymouth, Mass. Dr. Goodwin spent many years of his early life in Spain, at Cadiz, Ailcante, and Valencia, and was American vice consul at Tarragona during its terrible siege by the French troops in the peninsular war. He came home to Plymouth in 1817, and died in Havana in 1825. He belonged to a family of epicures on his father's side, and his mother, a daughter of Capt. Simeon Sampson, of the armed ship Mercury, on which Henry Laurens sailed for Holland in 1780, was renowned for the excellence of her cuisine. He planted the seed of the tomato in the bank garden in Plymouth, whence the plant was disseminated throughout the town, and to Clark's island, in Plymouth harbor. In Mr. Goodwin's family, and that of Mr. Watson, on the island, it was used as a vegetable as early as 1828.

Tomatoes were sold at the markets in New York city in 1820. They were only eaten, however, to a limited extent, being generally used for the manufacture of catsup. As early as 1826 the tomato was served up on the table of good old Mrs. Halliburton, in New Hampshire, although she could seldom induce her boarders to partake of it. Her husband, Capt. Halliburton, had doubtless imbibed a taste for it in Spain.